c. 1

FREE

037.3
Z1092
No. 1130

OFFICE OF STRATEGIC SERVICES

Research and Analysis Branch

R & A No. 1130

DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REFERENCE DIVISION
FILE COPY
PLEASE RETURN
REF

CHANGES IN THE REICH GOVERNMENT

26 August 1943

Copy No. 12

FREE

CHANGES IN THE REICH GOVERNMENT

"The Fuehrer has relieved Freiherr Constantin von Neurath, Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, from his office at his request.

"The Fuehrer has appointed Dr. Wilhelm Frick, Reichsminister of the Interior, to be Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia and has relieved him from the offices of Reichminister and Prussian Minister of the Interior and of his office of Delegate-General for the Reich Administration. Freiherr von Neurath and Dr. Frick continue to be Reichsministers.

"The Fuehrer has placed "en disponibilite" Hans Pfundtner, the principal Under Secretary of State in the Reich Ministry of the Interior at his own request.

"The Fuehrer has appointed Heinrich Himmler to be Reichsminister and Prussian Minister of Interior and Delegate General for Reich Administration.

"The Reich Labor Service no longer falls within the competence of the Reichsminister of Interior. The Leader of the Reich Labor Service as Head of the Supreme Reich Authority is immediately responsible to the Fuehrer. Konstantin Hierl, Leader of the Reich Labor Service, has been given the title, rank, and functions of a Reichminister by the Fuehrer.

"In consequence of the appointment of a new Reich Protector, the mission given to Daluege, Colonel General of the S.S. and Police, to deputize and take charge of the functions of Reich Protector has come to end.

"The Fuehrer has appointed Karl Hermann Frank, Under Secretary of State with the Reich Protector of Bohemia and Moravia, to be Minister of State, ranking equal with Reichministers." 1/

1/ Berlin, in German to Europe, August 24, 1943.

Himmler's New Powers

Himmler's appointment to the Reich Ministry of the Interior is the most important change in the Nazi regime since the Roehm purge of 1934. While it may shift the balance of power within the inner circle of Nazi leaders, it must be regarded as the decision of this inner circle as a whole, bound by the conviction that their only hope for survival depends upon standing together. The appointment tightens and extends the control of the SS and Police formations over all branches of the home front. The "Traditionalistic" strata of the Civil Service (of the ministerial, provincial, and local bureaucracy) which for some time have seen their influence reduced as contrasted with that of the Nazi forces, are further weakened. The Gestapo chief takes over the entire internal administration of the Reich, 1/ which is thus merged with the terroristic apparatus of the Nazi party. Himmler's appointment may portend a large-scale purge of the administrative bureaucracy.

This interpretation is confirmed by the retirement of Hans Pfundtner as "Leading Secretary of State" in the Ministry of Interior. Although a member of the Nazi party, Pfundtner is a civil servant of the traditional type, having entered the bureaucracy before 1914. His retirement leaves as senior Secretary of State in the ministry Wilhelm Stuckart, who is an SS Group Leader and has played an important role in the administration of both incorporated and occupied areas.

The appointment of Himmler as Reich Minister of the Interior testifies to growing internal difficulties and to the determination of the regime to go to the limit in applying the totalitarian terror. The opposition will now be ferreted out and destroyed even more ruthlessly than before. As far as the underground movement is concerned, this will mean little change. The increase in Himmler's powers seems to be primarily directed against the "conservative" groups in the Civil Service, against opposition among the middle classes and intellectuals, and against those business circles which may be inclined to favor an understanding with the Western Powers. In the balance of power within the Nazi inner circle Himmler's elevation may be interpreted as a defeat for Goering, who, among the Nazis, is reputed to have the strongest connection with these business groups. The retirement of von Neurath, long regarded as a link between the Nazi regime and conservative forces in Germany and the west, looks in the same direction.

Frictions between Himmler and the Armed Forces have often been played up. It is doubtful whether his new position constitutes a triumph of the SS over the Army. The Army Command must be vitally interested in "securing" the home front, and Himmler is certainly the man to prevent a "stab in the back" as long as it can be prevented by terror. On the other hand, as indicated elsewhere in this report, the removal of Hierl and the Reich Labor Service from the

---

1/ See the Appendix.

Ministry of Interior to the position of an independent agency immediately subordinate to Hitler may be attributed to the unwillingness of the Armed Forces to subordinate their auxiliary, the Labor Service, to Himmler. 1/

At the moment when the air is filled with rumors of peace feelers and of German hopes for a compromise peace, the Nazis place at the head of the Reich administration the very man with whom no peace and no compromise whatsoever seem to be possible. In the eyes of the world, Himmler stands for the Nazi terror and the Nazi racial policy in their most brutal and aggressive forms. His elevation does not finally destroy the possibility of further political changes in Germany as were outlined by the Central European Section in its special report of August 14, 1943, "Possible Political Changes in Nazi Germany in the Near Future". But for the moment the advancement of Himmler means that the Nazis attach more importance to the most rigid control of the home front than to any hope for a compromise. Within Germany, Himmler's elevation must crush hopes for the creation of an atmosphere more favorable to a negotiated peace and for the readiness of the regime to bring about the conditions for such a peace. It is tantamount to a Nazi declaration of determination to fight to the bitter end under the leadership of the Nazi Party.

It seems natural to draw an analogy between Himmler's appointment and the appointment of Scorza in April of this year; also Scorza's appointment was intended to tighten the grip of the party over the Italian people when a critical situation was approaching. Yet such comparison would be misleading. Scorza had played no important role in Italian politics for many years; the hope connected with his appointment was that a newcomer, a man with fresh energies and new ideas, would be able to revive the spirit of the people and to vitalize party institutions. Himmler has been an important figure in German politics ever since the Nazis came to power; he is well entrenched in the German administration and his appointment means that well-functioning and efficient organizations like the Gestapo and the SS which have been powerful factors in German politics for a long while, will be freed from the last obstacles and restraints and exercise full control. Himmler's appointment is not so much an attempt at a new departure, as Scorza's appointment was, but the logical end of a long-prepared development.

1/ See Page 6.

FREE

State and party positions now held by Himmler:

a) State:

1) Reich and Prussian minister of the Interior *
2) Commissioner General for Reich Administration in the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich *
3) Chief of the German Police
4) Reich Commissar for the Strengthening of German Folkdom
5) Member of the Reichstag
6) Member of the Prussian State Council (Staatsrat)

b) Party:

1) Reich Leader of the SS
2) Reichsleiter of the NSDAP
3) Delegate of the NSDAP for all Questions of Folkdom or Race

---

* New position.

FREE

Himmler and Germany's Eastern Policy

Although organisationally the Ministry of the Interior has no competence over the former Russian territories now occupied by Germany and no change has been reported in the functions exercised by Himmler in this area, Himmler has contacts with the East through his position as Reichs Leader of the SS and Chief of German Police and as Reichskommisar for the Security of German Nationality (Reichskommisar fuer die Festigung deutschen Volkstums). He is the exponent of a definite policy in regard to the treatment of the eastern peoples, and it can be taken for certain that, in making Himmler Minister of the Interior, the possible effect of his appointment on the development of German-Russian relations, will have been taken into account.

In contrast to Rosenberg, the head of the Reich Ministry for the Occupied Eastern Territories, who favors a certain autonomy for the eastern peoples, Himmler is the representative of a policy of absolute intransigeance. He has always insisted upon the extermination of the intellectuals and rejected any native autonomy whatsoever; he has favoured the concentration of all governmental authority in the hands of the Reich Germans and the transfer of land and property to them, in short the complete and permanent exploitation of the Eastern territories and their peoples by Germans for Germany. The Eastern territories are the field on which Himmler's racial policy has been most thoroughly tested and carried out. Furthermore it should be mentioned that these areas have been used by Himmler to strengthen the ties of the SS with big business and with the Junkers, since he has been able to award them large estates there. To Himmler the future of Germany is bound up with German domination over the Eastern regions. Himmler's SS and police have acted in the eastern areas in accordance with these ideas and the Soviet radio has been full of reports of their atrocities. From this point of view, Himmler's appointment seems to preclude Nazi reconciliation with Russia.

However, it should not be overlooked that Himmler's idea of German expansion allows for a certain flexibility. On the one hand, it means an attempt to extend German control as far to the East as possible; this is indicated by the fact that the Volksdeutsche in the Ukraine have been granted German citizenship by a special decree, and yet there has been virtually no re-settlement of them to other areas -- an action reserved in all other cases to territories incorporated or to be incorporated. On the other hand, Himmler as the Reichkommisar for the Security of the German Nationality has devoted himself to building up a German wall in the annexed Polish territories and in Lithuania; this wall is the minimum bastion, securing the existence of the German Volk.

If it is not possible to maintain German control over the wider Eastern regions, then the Nazis might try to use these regions for bargaining in a separate peace move, and fall back to the German wall.

Himmler's new position consolidates his control over the Volksgenosse in the whole eastern area, for the Ministry of the Interior is competent for citizenship and nationality, and for Maintenance of Germandom in Frontier Areas. Whatever policy seems feasible or necessary, the Germans in the East are ready to his hand for its execution. A man who unites ruthlessness and opportunism as Himmler does is ideally fitted for the handling of a situation in which developments in various directions are possible.

FREE

Changes regarding the Reich Labor Service

The Reich Labor Service is the organization for the compulsory labor which every German boy and girl has to devote to the Reich at the age of 17. It thus has nothing to do with the general administration of labor. Since the restoration of conscription in Germany, the Labor Service has been regarded as preparatory to the period of military service. During the war, the Labor Service has become an auxiliary of the Armed Forces, its units performing tasks of repair and construction all along the German fronts.

The Reich Labor Leader of the Labor Service, Konstantin Hierl, is an old career officer, who joined the Nazis in the twenties. Although the Labor Service nominally had been in the Ministry of the Interior since the mid-thirties, Hierl having the rank of State Secretary, actually both had been independent of the ministry and of the control of Frick as minister. The elevation of Hierl's office to an independent agency, immediately responsible to Hitler, thus means hardly any change in Hierl's powers and his relations to other Reich authorities. It may, however, indicate that the Armed Forces, which today have the most immediate interest in the Labor Service, do not wish it to appear as in any way connected with, or subordinated to, Himmler as Minister of the Interior.

The Changes in the Protectorate

The facts affecting the Protectorate in this administrative shuffle are:

1. Neurath, who has held only an honorary title since 1941, completely severs connections with the Protectorate.

2. Daluege, who has never been able to give full time to the Protectorate, is freed to devote all his time to his other tasks.

3. Frank, who has been one of the most powerful men in the Protectorate, receives a higher rank and retains his previous important position.

4. A new personality enters the picture through the appointment of Frick as Reichsprotektor.

Comments

1. The position of Reichsprotektor has been given increased importance by the appointment of an active, full-time holder, and by breaking with the previous equivocal situation of having an inactive Reichsprotektor "on leave", with a succession of temporary Acting Reichsprotektors who at the same time retained other important positions in the Reich (Heydrich was Chief of the Security Police, Daluege Chief of the Order Police).

This emphasizes the crucial importance of the Protectorate to the Reich, and indicates that the Reich intends to maintain control over the Protectorate to the bitter end.

The Protectorate is important to the Reich from three points of view:

First, and by far the most important, its steadily increasing economic value to the German war machine. The Protectorate's industrial production is of absolute value to Germany. In 1941 Germany took goods valued at over a billion and a half Reichsmarks from the Protectorate, and the total has increased very considerably since then. Its relative value is steadily increasing; every time a factory in western Germany is bombed out, its sister plants in the Protectorate become that much more vitally important, since this area is still out of reach of steady raids.

Second, the Protectorate is of military importance. Reliable reports indicate that Germany is steadily fortifying the Slovak-Moravian frontier, which constitutes the shortest natural line of defense for the Reich proper in the East. (In 1939 German writers pointed out that the incorporation of the Protectorate had actually shortened the total length of Germany's frontiers while increasing its total area.)

FREE

Third, the Protectorate has ideological importance. Along with the Sudetenland and Austria, its retention is one of the cornerstones of German domestic propaganda. Should Germany be forced to evacuate territory acquired by purely military conquest, its loss could be more easily justified to the German people than the loss of these three sectors which German propaganda claims were not incorporated through conquest, but through at least a semblance of voluntary, "legal" action.

2. Although the Protectorate has thus gained in importance within the Reich through the new appointments, its internal situation will probably be little changed. German policy toward the Czechs has had a dual face from the very beginning. The vital importance of Czech industrial production has obliged Germany to make every effort to keep Czech workers on the job and more or less satisfied with their position. The principal effort of German policy has therefore been propagandistic, an attempt to convince the Czechs that it is to their best interests to cooperate voluntarily with the Reich. Coupled with this has been ruthless terror against those who fail to be convinced. The terror, however, has for the most part been secondary, except for certain periods when a major crack-down seemed necessary. These terror waves have usually coincided with outside events unfavorable to Germany, such as the failure to conquer Russia in the fall of 1941, the Allied landings in North Africa in November 1942, etc., which raised the hopes of the Czechs. It is probable that the Russian victories in the East and the Allied conquest of Sicily will also arouse new resistance in the Protectorate, and that there will therefore be a new wave of executions in the near future. The promotion of Karl Hermann Frank, who is SS and Police Leader in the Protectorate and who has always been associated with the application of terroristic measures, shows that this aspect of German policy will not be neglected in future, although at the same time the appointment of Frick as Reichsprotektor probably indicates that the dual emphasis on voluntary collaboration plus terror will also continue. Frick is not an SS man and has not been publicly responsible for terrorism, although as an old-line Nazi he will certainly not hesitate to approve its use wherever necessary. It is likely that Frick, with his many years of administrative experience, will concentrate on the technical administrative coordination of the Protectorate, leaving the policing of the population to his chief aide, Frank.

3. The promotion of Frank will be considered by the Czech population as a renewed insult. Frank, who is the most cordially hated man in the Protectorate, is an old Sudeten German leader, for years one of the most rabid anti-Czech propagandists of the Henlein party. The mere fact of his appointment in 1939 was a calculated insult to the Czechs, for he is the negation of everything for which democratic Czechoslovakia stood: he is violently anti-intellectual, sneeringly anti-democratic, and a believer in iron-handed terrorism.

PRIME

4. The departure of Neurath is of little immediate importance to the Protectorate, for he has had nothing to do with it since 1941. It has minor import in that it represents a formal abandonment of the former German attempt to make the incorporation of the Protectorate palatable to the non-Nazi powers. Neurath's appointment in March 1939, when the outside world was still horrified at the implications of the German occupation, indicated that Germany hoped to appease the Czechs and avoid heavy-handed measures, and his two-year tenure of office actually bore this out in many respects. Although the iron hand was definitely applied in September 1941, with the appointment of Reinhard Heydrich as Acting Reichsprotektor, Neurath nevertheless retained the title of Reichsprotektor and was held, so to speak, in reserve for possible future use. Now that he is definitely replaced by a full-fledged Nazi, all pretense is abandoned.

FREE

APPENDIX

Himmler as Commissioner General for Reich Administration.

The position of Commissioner General for Reich Administration means membership in the Ministerial Council for the Defense of the Reich, whose other members are Göring, Keitel, Funk, Bormann, and Lammers. This council was created at the outbreak of the war with the dual purpose of relieving Hitler of any but the most crucial decisions and of concentrating the highest policy-making, especially legislative power in a small body which in practice replaced the Reich cabinet. In this body of six, Reich Minister of the Interior Frick, as "Commissioner General for Reich Administration", represented the entire field of state administration in the broader sense, including also justice, education, and church affairs.

Since the establishment of the Defense Council, general laws have usually been enacted in the form of decrees by the Defense Council, while laws referring to administrative affairs have often been issued by Frick as Commissioner for Administration in conjunction with two of his colleagues on the Council. His position thus implied large legislative powers. Although Himmler had already been deputy to Frick as Commissioner for Administration and as such had frequently signed decrees, he has now fully replaced Frick and thus holds his share in legislative power within his own right.

Himmler as Minister of the Interior

The Interior Ministry has functions in the realm of legislation as well as administration. One of the main legislative functions of the Interior Ministry is the preparation of all laws in the following main spheres: the constitutional structure of the Reich, including the relation between Reich and the states, and the relation between the state and other public bodies, such as the party and its affiliations; the organization of all administration, including that of the states and their sub-divisions, the provinces, districts, counties, etc. (this means the establishment of new authorities, their jurisdiction, changes in their powers or areas, abolition of administrative agencies, etc.); citizenship and nationality; government of cities and other municipalities; and the civil service and the status and privileges of civil servants. Moreover, since the first instance of an increase in Reich territory, that of the incorporation of the Saar, it has been the task of the Interior Ministry to prepare the laws and other measures relating to these incorporations, including the "co-ordination" of their administration with that of the Reich, and this even in cases where, as in the Protectorate and the Government General, the

respective territory is not entirely assimilated to the Reich. In a sense, the Interior Ministry of the Reich has assumed the functions of an Interior Ministry of the "New Order". This, however, does not refer to the occupied Russian territories where a separate Reich ministry has been put in charge.

Besides preparing legislation, the Interior Ministry is in charge of the execution of all laws concerning general interior administration. This sphere is much larger than that of interior ministries in other countries. It comprises all levels of government down to local government, where "self-government" has ceased to exist.

Side by side with the right to give orders and to supervise the activities of all agencies of interior administration, the minister's executive powers include appointment, promotion, and dismissal of many officials and functionaries, while in other cases it means the right to propose such decisions to the Fuehrer. Thus, for the larger cities, the interior minister practically appoints the mayors and other leading agents.

With respect to one of the most important executive branches traditionally belonging to German interior administration, the police, the appointment of Himmler as minister does not, of course, add much to the powers he already had as "Reich Leader of SS and Chief of the German Police". Although this position was formally in the Interior Ministry, Himmler actually was not under Frick's orders but exercised his police powers independently. Taking over the ministry will, however, give him added power to use the whole of the administrative machinery in the interest of police functions and also facilitate the preparation of legislation in police matters in a way more to the liking of the Gestapo.

Regarding general administration, the appointment of Himmler may foreshadow a general re-shuffling, or even purge, of the administration. It may announce a "Nazification" of the civil service even more complete than had already been the case, since, under Frick, technical efficiency had sometimes prevailed over special assiduity in the service of the party. It might even mean that the influence of certain party branches will have to give way to that of the SS, whenever this body wants such influence or power. In short, it may indicate the complete "co-ordination" of the administrative executive with the Gestapo. As such, it may bring the terror machinery of the regime closer to the population, which, while strengthening the hold of the regime over the people, may also enlarge the gap between the regime and all those who still considered the Gestapo as an "extraordinary" weapon of the state, and not as its general instrument of "day to day" administration.